THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) Implementation of NREG Act is monitored on regular basis. Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have been set up at State as well as district levels. Village level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have also been set up for local monitoring. Members of the Central Employment Guarantee Council also undertake field visits to various districts. National level Monitors (NLMs) and Area Officers visit various districts to oversee the progress of the Act. NLMs have made 331 visits to Phase I and Phase II districts.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Information is being collected from these States.

Setting up of Land Reforms Commission

986. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to formulate a Land Reform Policy also planning to set up Land Reforms Commission to look after the land-related problems in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) and (b) It has been decided by Government of India to constitute a "Committee on State Agrarian Relations and the Unfinished Task in Land Reforms" under the Chairmanship of Minister for Rural Development, and a "National Council for Land Reforms" under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The composition, terms of reference, etc. of the Committee and the Council are being finalized.

Increase of rural/tribal poverty in the country

987. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rural/tribal poverty is increasing in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; State-wise;

(c) the reasons for increasing poverty in the rural/tribal areas of the country; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to reduce the poverty in rural and tribal areas in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission estimates poverty at National and State level from the large sample survey on Household Consumer Expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest such survey was conducted in the year 2004-05 (NSS 61st Round). The poverty ratios among the social groups have been estimated from the percentage distribution of persons of the respective social groups as obtained from this large sample survey and the poverty line for all population. These estimates of poverty ratios of social groups are based on URP (Uniform Recall Period) consumption distribution of NSS 61st Round (July, 2004-June, 2005) in which the consumer expenditure data for all the items are collected from 30-day recall period. The estimates are based on the methodology outlined in the Report of the Expert Group on 'Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor'. These estimates of poverty in 2004-05 are comparable with the estimation of the NSS